

**Listen Carefully,
Tip #1
When in doubt call
the ECF helpdesk**



ECF Filing Tips for Attorneys and Support Staff

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Filing a Memorandum in Support/Opposition and a LR7.1 Word Count Compliance Certificate

Local Rule 7.1 requires that a Word Count Compliance Certificate be filed when filing a memorandum related to a civil motion. Below are steps to file the LR7.1 Word Count Compliance Certificate in ECF. (The example below shows how to file a Memorandum in Support of a Motion but could also be used to file a Memorandum in Opposition)

1. Create the Memorandum in Support and convert the document to PDF.
2. Visit the U.S. District of Minnesota's website located at: www.mnd.uscourts.gov and click on the **Forms** link. Complete the 7.1 Word Count Compliance Certificate form and convert the document to PDF.
3. Log into **ECF**.
4. Click on the **Civil** menu choice.
5. Click on the **Supporting Documents and Responses** link located below the Motions and Related Filings heading.
6. Type in the **case number** and click on **Next**.
7. Review the short case title to ensure you are filing in the correct case. If correct, click on the **Next** button.
8. From the drop-down list provided, click on the **Memorandum in Support of Motion** (or choose another memorandum option if appropriate). Click on the **Next** button.
9. Click on the name of the filing party and click on the **Next** button.
10. Click on the **Browse** button and navigate to the location of the PDF version of the Memorandum in Support of the Motion. Select the document and click on **Open**.
11. Click on the radio button "**Yes**" to include an additional attachment. Click on the **Next** button.
12. The **Attachments to Documents** window appears. Click the **Browse** button to navigate to the location of the PDF version of the Word Count Compliance

document. Select the document and click on **Open**.

13. From the **Category** drop-down box select LR7.1 Word Count Compliance Certificate. Click on **Add to List**. Click on the **Next** button.
14. The **Event Linking** window appears. Depending on how many motions are filed and not ruled on, this window will display all of the motions filed that require a ruling from the Judge. Select the appropriate motion. If only one motion is filed that requires a ruling that motion will be selected for you. Click on the **Next** button when complete.
15. Add additional text to the **Docket Text** window if desired. Click on the **Next** button when complete.
16. Review the filing. If you are ready to file click on the **Next** button. The **Notice of Electronic Filing** appears.

<p>NOTE: If you forget to attaché the Word Count Compliance Certificate you may file it separately in ECF using the Supporting Documents and Responses link.</p>

The E-Government Act And Filing Documents that Contain Personal Identifiers in a Civil Case

According to the E-Government Act of 2002, (Pub. L. 107-347), in addition to filing a redacted version of the document in ECF, a party filing a document containing personal data identifiers may also:

1. File an unredacted document under seal without seeking leave of the court in accordance with Section VI, Part D of Civil Procedure Guide regarding filing documents under seal (see also below),

OR

2. File a reference list under seal without seeking leave of the court in accordance with Section VI, Part D of Civil Procedure Guide regarding filing documents under seal (see also below). The reference list shall contain the complete personal data identifier(s) and the redacted identifier(s) used in its place in the filing.

To file documents containing personal identifiers:

1. Title of redacted version of document shall include:

REDACTED PURSUANT TO THE E-GOVERNMENT ACT

2. File the redacted version of the document electronically in ECF with a ***Conventional Filing Placeholder*** as an attachment indicating the existence of the sealed document on the record. The Conventional Filing Placeholder form is available on the FORMS page of the court website at www.mnd.uscourts.gov.
3. Print the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) for the redacted version of the Conventional Filing Placeholder and attach both to the envelope of the sealed version or list.
4. Seal the unredacted version or list in accordance with Section VI, Part D, Subpart 5 of the Civil ECF Procedure Guide as follows:

Seal by closing, fastening, taping, or otherwise securing the document in an envelope no larger than 9x12 with the following information in the front of the envelope:

- Case Number

- Case Name
- Party name and Complete Title of Document (i.e., Defendant Johnson's Affidavit of John Smith)
- Document Number Assigned by ECF for the redacted version
- The words:

**“SEALED PURSUANT TO E-GOVERNMENT ACT –
UNREDACTED DOCUMENT ENCLOSED”**

(Redacted Version filed in ECF as Document #[number])

OR

**“SEALED PURSUANT TO E-GOVERNMENT ACT –
REFERENCE LIST ENCLOSED** (Redacted Version

filed in ECF as Document #[number])

5. File the sealed unredacted version or list conventionally in accordance with Section VI, Part D of the Civil ECF Procedure Guide as follows:
 - a. The paper original of the sealed document shall be filed with the clerk's office **before 5:00 p.m.** on the due date.
 - b. Mail or deliver a COURTESY COPY (with a copy of the NEF attached) of the *sealed* document, as required by Section I, Part E of the Civil ECF Procedure Guide, to the District or Magistrate Judge handling the matter in a separate envelope (if papers are related to a motion, only ONE courtesy copy is required).
 - c. The *sealed* document shall be served conventionally, with a copy of the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF), by the filer on parties who are entitled to service. The e-notice of the court's receipt of these documents shall not constitute service.
 - d. A Certificate of Service shall be filed in ECF, if required, for both the redacted version and the sealed documents.
 - e. The Clerk will note receipt of the sealed unredacted version and/or reference list on the record as follows:
 - i. Pursuant to the e-government act, an unredacted version of this document has been filed under seal with the clerk. SEALED DOCUMENT RECEIVED ON [DATE].

OR

- ii. Pursuant to the e-government act, a reference list of personal identifiers and codes used in this document has been filed under seal with the clerk. SEALED DOCUMENT RECEIVED ON [DATE].

6. The sealed unredacted version and/or reference list shall be retained by the court as part of the record.

TIPS

- Addresses in search and seizures. This happens often in motions to suppress search and seizure and any supporting documents to the motion. Home addresses need to be redacted to city and state.
- Personal information put into the Position on Sentencing/Sentencing Memorandum documents. Examples include children's names (must be redacted to initials), personal family issues, medical/mental issues. Letters written on behalf of the defendant should be referred to chambers for whether they should be filed or sent directly to the judge.

Defendant's home address on the Notice of Appeal should be redacted.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

PLACEHOLDER FOR
*[Title (in ALL CAPS) of doc being filed
conventionally]*

[Plaintiff's Name]

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Case Number: *[Case Number]*

[Defendant's Name]

Defendant(s)

This document is a place holder for the following item(s) which are filed in conventional or physical form with the Clerk's Office:

[list item(s) for which this notice serves as a placeholder in ECF]
(e.g.: Exhibit A - Photo of Airplane)

If you are a participant in this case, this filing will be served upon you in conventional format.

This filing was not e-filed for the following reason(s):

___ Voluminous Document* (Document number of order granting leave to file conventionally: ___)

___ Unable to Scan Documents (e.g., PDF file size of one page larger than 2MB, illegible when scanned)

___ Physical Object (description):

___ Non Graphical/Textual Computer File (audio, video, etc.) on CD or other media

___ Item Under Seal pursuant to a court order* (Document number of protective order: ___)

___ Item Under Seal pursuant to the Judicial Conference Privacy Policy (General Order 53)
(Document number of redacted version: ___)

___ Other (description):

* Filing of these items requires Judicial Approval.

E-file this place holder in ECF in place of the documents filed conventionally. File a copy of this Placeholder and a copy of the NEF with the Clerk's Office along with the conventionally filed item(s).

Filing Objections to a Report and Recommendation

Objections to the Report and Recommendation should be filed with the event provided in ECF. The event can be found in either the Other Documents heading OR the Supporting Documents and Responses heading. If the Objection event is used instead of the Objection to the Report and Recommendation, then the proper linking will not occur in ECF.

1. Create the Objection to the Report and Recommendation and convert the document to PDF.
2. Log into **ECF**.
3. Click on the **Civil** menu choice.
4. Click on the **Supporting Documents and Responses (or Other Documents)** link located below the Motions and Related Filings heading.
5. Type in the **case number** and select the file. Click on **Next**.
6. Review the short case title to ensure you are filing in the correct case. If correct, click on the **Next** button.
7. From the drop-down list provided, click on the **Objection to the Report and Recommendations** option. Click on the **Next** button.
8. Click on the **Browse** button and navigate to the location of the PDF version of the Report and Recommendation. Select the document and click on **Open**. Click on the **Next** button.
9. The **Event Linking** window appears. Select the Report and Recommendation document you are objecting to from the list provided. If only one is filed this will be the only one listed. Click on the **Next** button when complete.
10. Add additional text to the **Docket Text** window if desired. Click on the **Next** button when complete.
11. Review the filing. If you are ready to file click on the **Next** button. The **Notice of Electronic Filing** appears.

NOTE: If you are filing a reply or response to a Objection to the Report and Recommendation be sure and use the reply or response option available in either the Supporting Documents and Responses link OR the Other Documents link.

Filing Documents Under Seal

When filing a sealed document pursuant to a protective order or pursuant to the Privacy Policy of the E- Government Act of 2002, conventional filing is permitted without seeking additional leave of the court. The following procedures apply:

1. Prepare the Conventional Filing Placeholder (available on the FORMS page of the court's website at www.mnd.uscourts.gov). This will be used to replace the actual document that will be filed conventionally. The placeholder explains to the court and customers what the actual filing is and why it has not been added to ECF.
2. E-file the placeholder in ECF in place of the sealed document(s) being filed conventionally in order to indicate, in ECF, the existence of documents that will reside on the shelf in the clerk's office;
3. Print the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) for the entry which contains the Conventional Filing Placeholder;
4. Attach the NEF as a cover sheet to the front of the sealed document to be conventionally filed.
5. File the original sealed document(s), conventionally, with the Clerk's Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on the due date.

Note: If filing sealed documents before e-filing the placeholder, attach the placeholder to the front of the sealed document to be conventionally filed. Mail or deliver sealed documents to the Clerk's Office with a cover letter stating that the e-filing will be completed later. After e-filing the placeholder, print the NEF, staple it to the front of the placeholder and deliver it to the same Clerk's Office so that Clerk's Office staff can match the sealed documents to the appropriate electronic entry.

6. Mail or deliver a COURTESY COPY (with a printed paper copy of the NEF attached) pursuant to Section I, Part E of the Procedure Guide for the District Judge or Magistrate Judge handling the matter in a separate envelope.
7. Serve all sealed documents filed conventionally (i.e., in paper form), with a printed paper copy of the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) attached as a cover sheet, on all parties entitled to service. The e-notice of the filing of the placeholder for these documents shall not constitute service.

8. File a Certificate of Service in ECF for all conventionally filed sealed documents.
9. The Clerk's Office will note receipt of the conventionally filed original sealed documents on the record.

Applications to File Conventionally

1. **Leave of Court Required for Conventional Filing.** A party must seek leave of the court to file a document conventionally, except for the following materials, which can be filed conventionally without a court order:
 - a. Items that cannot be converted to electronic form, such as:
 - i. video/audio tape,
 - ii. photo, chart, graph, diagram or text document for which just one page exceeds 2 MB in size when converted at 200 dpi
 - b. The “administrative record” in Social Security and Habeas Corpus cases (see Sections IV and V respectively of the Civil Procedure Guide).
 - c. Documents filed under seal pursuant to protective order (see Section VI, Part C of the Civil Procedure Guide).
 - d. Unredacted documents filed under seal pursuant to the Privacy Policy of the E-Government Act of 2002 (see Section VI, Part D of the Civil Procedure Guide).
2. **Obtaining Leave to File Conventionally.** To request permission to file certain documents conventionally:
 - a. Complete and file the “Application to File Conventionally” form found on the FORMS page of our website at www.mnd.uscourts.gov.
 - i. Complete the form with a **detailed description** of why you are unable to file the documents electronically.
 - ii. The most common reason for filing this application would be for voluminous exhibits; i.e., exhibits totaling several hundred pages or more (see Section VII of the Civil Procedure Guide).
 - iii. Applications based on incomplete explanations will not be granted.
 - b. The application must be filed in ECF as "Application to File Conventionally" under "Other Documents," and approved before the filing due date.

- c. The filer must allow 5 days for the assigned Magistrate Judge to review this request.
- d. The Magistrate Judge will issue an order granting or denying the application.

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA**

_____,
Plaintiff,

v.

_____,
Defendant.

**APPLICATION TO
FILE CERTAIN DOCUMENTS
CONVENTIONALLY**

Case No. ____cv____ / ____

The undersigned attorney, _____, the attorney of
[Name of attorney]
record for _____, the _____, in the above
[Name of party] [Plaintiff or Defendant]
captioned matter, seeks leave of the court to file the following items conventionally (provide a
detailed description of the documents to be filed conventionally - use additional pages as
needed):

.

Leave to file conventionally is requested for the following reasons (**be very specific** by
including (i) the format of the information, (ii) approximate number of pages, and (iii) an
explanation as to why the documents cannot be filed electronically - use additional pages as
needed):

.

Dated: _____, 200__.

[Attorney's signature block (incl phone #)]

Querying – Finding Cases Attorneys are Linked to in ECF

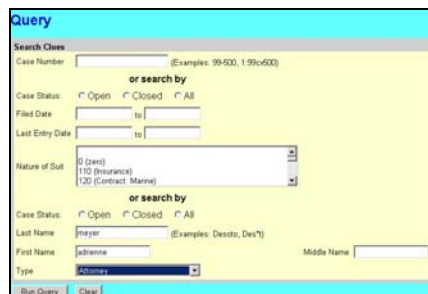
If an attorney leaves a law firm and is no longer representing the parties they previously were linked to in ECF, it is the responsibility of the attorney to file a Notice of Withdraw in ECF. To assist in obtaining all the cases an attorney is linked to in ECF, view the instructions below.

1. Log into ECF and click on the **Query** Screen. The **PACER** login and password fields appear. Type the information and click on **Login**.

OR

Log into **PACER**.

2. At the **Query** Screen type the First and Last name of the attorney you wish to view case information for in the fields provided.



3. Use the **Type** drop-down arrow to select **Attorney**.
4. The radio button default to **All**. If you wish to only view the open or closed cases the attorney is linked to, select one of the other radio button options. Remember after a case is closed it may still have documents filed within the case.
5. Click on the **Run Query** button.
6. A list of cases appears that the attorney is currently linked to and will continue receive e-mail notifications on if documents are filed.

NOTE: The Query feature can also be used to search for a specific case, cases linked to a judge, cases linked to a specific party or other research purposes.
If you wish to be added to a case be sure to file a Notice of Appearance or Notice of Attorney Appearance/Substitution

Filing a Summons Returned Executed

Preferably the Court would like to have the Summons Returned Executed filed as one filing but if the summons forms are returned at different dates the ECF system allows you to file them separately as well. Below are instructions for filing the Summons Returned Executed.

1. Scan the original summons form (Don't include instructions page) and make this your first page in the PDF document that will be filed. Attach to that summons the service documents such as the affidavit of service.
2. Log into **ECF**.
3. Click on the **Civil** menu choice.
4. Click on the **Service of Process** link located below the Initial Pleadings and Service heading.
5. Type in the **case number** and select the file. Click on **Next**.
6. Review the short case title to ensure you are filing in the correct case. If correct, click on the **Next** button.
7. From the drop-down list provided, click on the **Summons Returned Executed** option. (You will also see other option such as Summons Returned Unexecuted. Be sure NOT TO USE the Affidavit of Service or Certificate of Service events.) Click on the **Next** button.
8. Click on the **Browse** button and navigate to the location of the PDF version of the Summons form. Select the document and click on **Open**. Click on the **Next** button.
9. The **Document Linking** window appears. If the stipulation is linked to another document such as a complaint; check the box provided. (You may also wish to enter the date the document(s) was filed or the document number that was given so that not all the documents appear to select from window.) If the checkbox is selected click on the **Next** button and the list of documents appears for selection. Select the document this filing is related to. Click on the **Next** button.
10. From the list provided, click on the name of the person served. If more than one party was served use the mouse + control button to select all the parties. Click on the **Next** button.

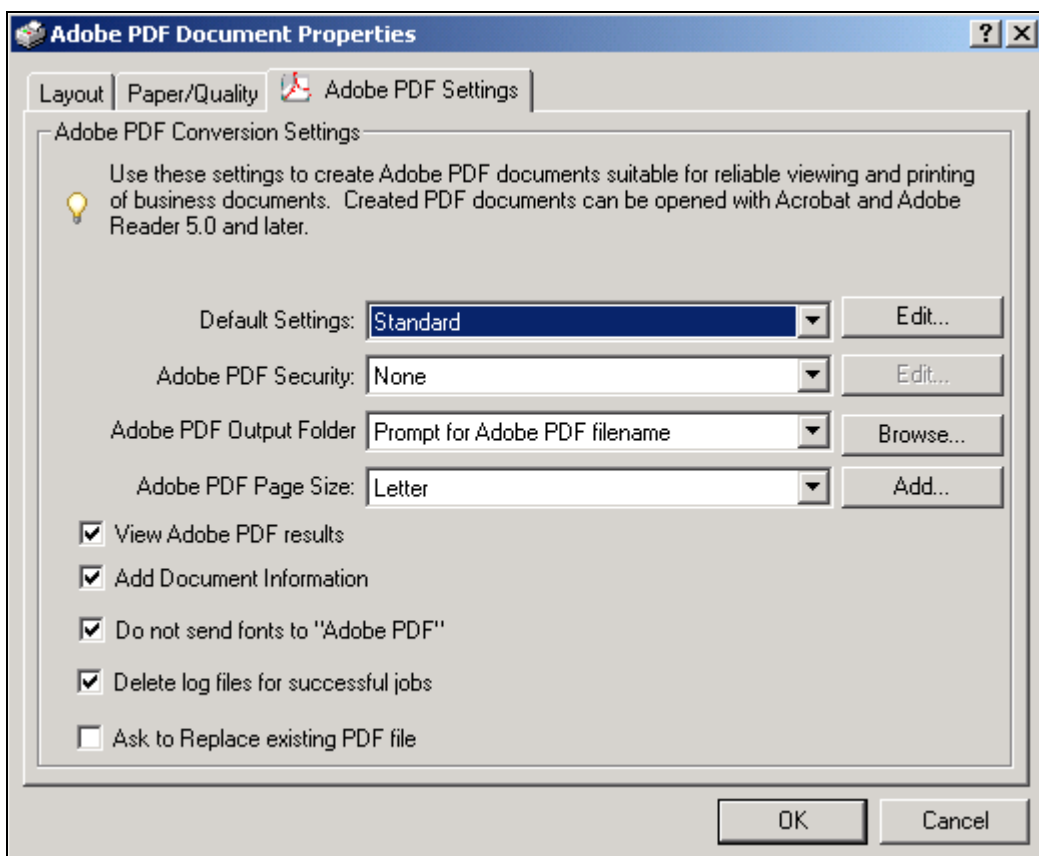
11. The **Date Served** window appears. In the text box provided type the date served (mm/dd/yy). The answer due date is automatically calculated and cannot be changed by the filer. Enter the date served for any additional parties if needed. Click on the **Next** button when complete.
12. A blank window appears. Click on the **Next** button.
13. Review the filing. If you are ready to file click on the **Next** button. The **Notice of Electronic Filing** appears.

Adobe Acrobat Tips

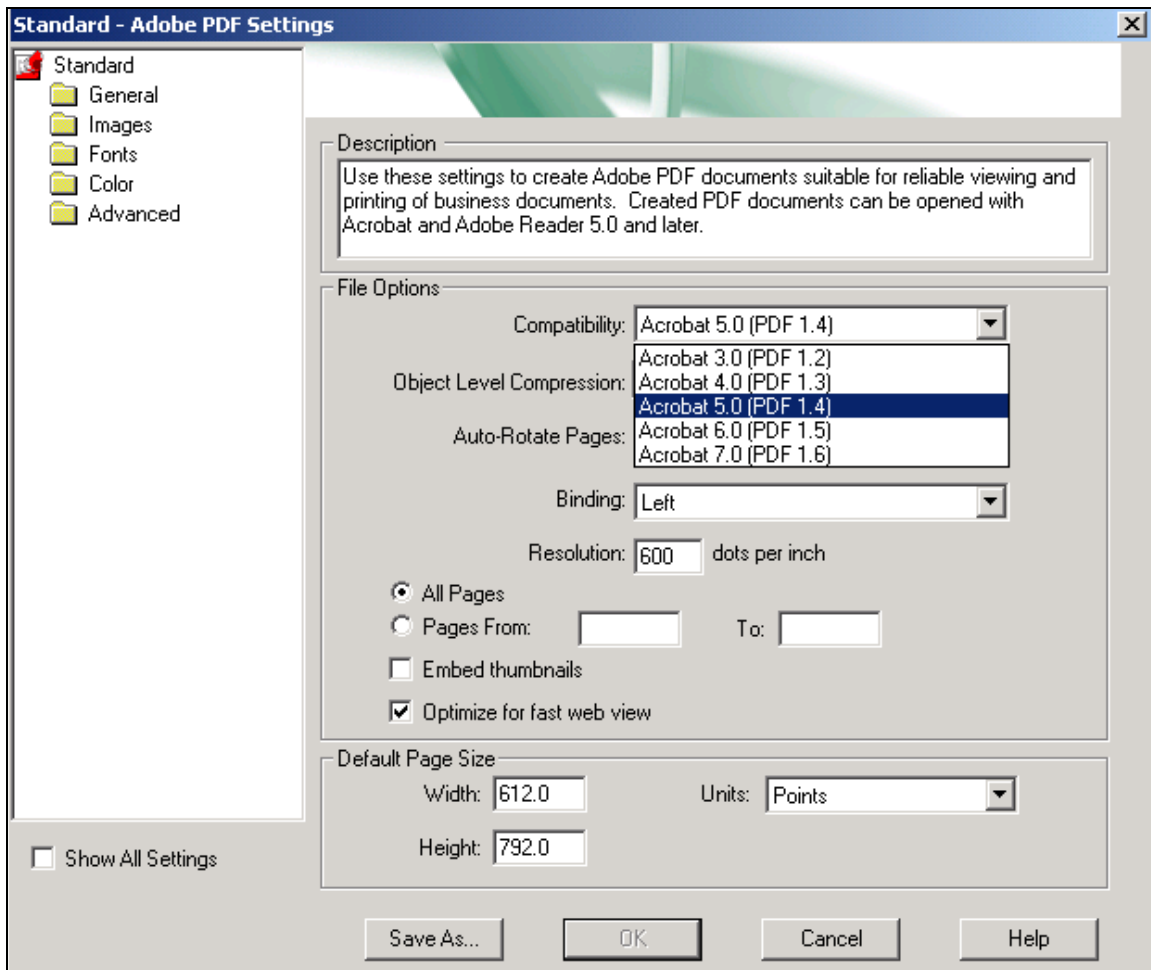
Adobe Acrobat 6.0 and higher includes considerable changes from the previous versions of Adobe Acrobat. Because of these changes, settings within Acrobat must be changed to ensure continued compatibility and readability for parties using Acrobat 4.x or 5.x. Follow the steps below to ensure the settings are properly changed.

PDF File Conversion using Adobe Acrobat

1. Click on the **File/Print** menu choice.
2. Select **Adobe PDF** as the printer and click on the **Properties** button.



3. Click on the **Edit** button located next to the **Default Settings** option.



4. In the **Compatibility** list, click **Acrobat 4.0(PDF 1.3)**. Click on **OK**. Remember you will be in the Save As dialog box and you may continue with the converting function by clicking on **Save**.

NOTE: If you use the scanning option with Adobe Acrobat you must also change settings to make scanned documents compatible with previous versions.

Click on the **File** menu option and choose **Create PDF**, and then click **From Scanner**. In the **Compatibility with** list, click **Acrobat 4.0 and later**. Click on **Scan** and scan as normal. This setting will now be the default for future scans.

Additional Adobe Acrobat Tips

1. Remember the Court cannot endorse any one PDF conversion software, however, Adobe Acrobat Reader (free from the internet) is required to view the PDF documents from ECF. This software does not contain the ability to convert documents to PDF. Adobe Acrobat Standard or Professional are the Adobe conversion tools required to convert documents to PDF.

2. Stick with basic fonts. Not everyone has the same fonts installed on their computer causing the information to appear differently in some instances. Also avoid using any special characters such as checkboxes as Adobe may have trouble converting those items to PDF.
3. If you have the option to convert using Adobe PDFWriter or Adobe Distiller, remember the Distiller will do a better job of formatting the document and embedding fonts, but the document size will be greater.
4. Wipe metadata from your file. The document's title, author, subject, file location and keywords may be embedded in the PDF document when you convert the document. To remove open the PDF document in Adobe Acrobat and choose the File/Document Properties option from the menu choice. Delete the editable information from the text boxes and save the file.
5. PDF documents can contain hyperlinks to important websites that are referred to in the brief. Hyperlinks cannot be created to Westlaw, Lexis or other research sites or to other documents filed in ECF.
6. PDF documents cannot contain encryption, passwords or document tracking information.
7. It is preferable to have the documents created searchable for the court.
8. Check this out: www.pdfforallawyers.com
9. Remember ECF supports Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape. Currently other web browsers are not on the list including Firefox.
10. If you have issues viewing your PDF documents in ECF try this:
Go to Edit/Preferences in Adobe Acrobat.
UNCHECK the box "Display PDF in Browser"
11. Another tip if the file doesn't appear, clear your Internet Browser's Cache or Temporary Internet Files.

Scanning Tips

- Use 200dpi for scanning documents.
- Set image type to black and white bitmap, text (image only), or line art.
- Do not use OCR or Textbridge, these options scan the document for altering or word processing. For filing purposes, we need only an image of the document
- Use black ink if possible. Blue ink and pencil do not scan well. If necessary, make a copy of the document before scanning it, and darken with the copy machine settings.
- For large documents, where only the last page has a signature, consider converting the document to PDF in your word processor and only scanning the signature page. Use Adobe Acrobat Writer to combine the two PDF files.
- Request depositions on floppy disk and convert them to PDF using a word processor.
- Use Adobe Acrobat Writer software on the scanning computer to simplify the scanning process. Scan documents directly into Adobe by clicking File...Import...Scan on the menu bar. (Note: you can still use pdfFactory on other computers to convert word processed documents)
- Check the size of a scanned document before uploading it to CM/ECF. The size limit is 2MB per document. To check the file size, locate the file in Windows Explorer, right click on the file and choose Properties.
- Estimated number of pages in a 2MB scanned document Plain text, correspondence, pleadings, etc. 40-50 pages
- Tables, charts, extensive graphics 15-20 pages < Condensed transcripts 12-15 pages
- If a scanned document is larger than 3MB, use Adobe Acrobat Writer to extract pages from the document to a separate file. Or use pdfFactory to print the pages to two separate files. This prevents re-scanning the document.

Filing a Stipulation

When filing a stipulation in ECF be sure the PDF document filed does not include a signature line for the Judge or a proposed order. All proposed orders are to the Judge's Chambers e-mail box. Also be sure you select all parties you are filing on behalf of.

1. Convert the stipulation to PDF.
2. Log into **ECF**.
3. Click on the **Civil** menu choice.
4. Click on the **Other Documents** link located below the Other Filings heading.
5. Type in the **case number** and select the file. Click on **Next**.
6. Review the short case title to ensure you are filing in the correct case. Select the party(ies) you are filing on behalf of. (All of them. Use the mouse + control to select multiple parties) Once correct, click on the **Next** button.
7. Because you are selecting other parties that you do not normally represent you may be asked if you wish to be added as an attorney for those other parties. Click the **Next** button to bypass adding yourself as counsel for the other parties.
8. From the drop-down list provided, click on the **Stipulation** option. Click on the **Next** button.
9. A reminder text window appears regarding the language that should be omitted from the stipulation and the filing of the proposed order.
10. Click on the **Browse** button and navigate to the location of the PDF version of the Stipulation form. Select the document and click on **Open**. Click on the **Next** button.
11. The **Document Linking** window appears. If the stipulation is linked to another document such as a complaint; check the box provided. (You may also wish to enter the date the document(s) was filed or the document number that was given so that not all the documents appear to select from window.) If the checkbox is selected click on the **Next** button and the list of documents appears for selection. Select the document this filing is related to. Click on the **Next** button.

12. The **Docket Text** window appears. Type additional text in the box provided to describe what the stipulation is for. Click on the **Next** button.

13. Review the filing. If you are ready to file click on the **Next** button. The **Notice of Electronic Filing** appears.

NOTE: If filing a Stipulation for Dismissal vs. a Stipulation the person you are filing on behalf appears twice. The first time select yourself and the second time select all the other parties.

Free Tools Just For You

New Cases System

The New Cases System is a free tool available both on the District Court's website: www.mnd.uscourts.gov and in Reports link in ECF. Each time a new case is assigned and opened in the District Court of Minnesota the case information is logged into the New Cases System where it stays for the next 30 days.

Written Opinions

Judges when posting orders and such to ECF have an option to mark a document as a "written opinion." By doing this, it makes the document available in the Written Opinions Report located in ECF in Reports. The entire report is "free" to view in ECF. If a judge has made a document a written opinion it will be noted that way in the docket text.

Written Opinions Report				
U.S. District Court -- District of Minnesota Filed Report Period: 2/26/2006 - 3/31/2006				
Case Number & Name:	Date Filed:	Doc. #	Description:	Notes:
0:01-cv-00020-ADM-AJB Parker v. Osterberg	03/28/2006	9	ORDER (Written Opinion). Signed by Judge Ann D. Montgomery on 03/31/06. (admin.)	Office: DMN Case Flags: Rep Recommendation NOS: Contract G Cause: 30.1202 Reclamation Act
	03/28/2006	10	ORDER (Written Opinion). Signed by Judge Ann D. Montgomery on 03/31/06. (admin.)	Office: DMN Case Flags: Rep Recommendation NOS: Contract G Cause: 30.1202 Reclamation Act
Total number of opinions reported: 2				

CourtWeb

CourtWeb is a free tool located on the District Court's website: www.mnd.uscourts.gov. (Court Rulings) This feature, which has a strong search feature ECF does not have, allows those researching to type in key words that may appear in the document summary/title or inside the PDF version of the ruling. The feature is optional just like Written Opinions is optional. Judges may post what they wish to post on the system. It is not a complete record of all court rulings.

Public Terminals

All four courthouses (Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Fergus Falls) have public terminals that allow researchers to locate electronic documents on ECF. If you wish to have documents printed, however, the copying fee is imposed.

Court Announcements List

Want to keep track of changes to ECF, press releases, or other court news? Sign up for the Court Announcements List by sending an e-mail to ecfhelpdesk@mnd.uscourts.gov